



Why CARE?

The Children's Law Center of California Presents:
CARE
Crossover Advocacy Resource Effort

Legal Representation for Children

Children's Law Center of California is a non profit, public interest law firm that provides legal representation for tens of thousands of foster youth in Los Angeles and Sacramento.

CLC 's core mission:

direct legal representation of children in the dependency system. Our attorneys also advocate for critical services and support for these youth.

Children's Law Center of Los Angeles

- ▶ 29,000 foster youth
- ▶ 21 fulltime dependency court rooms
- ▶ 110 attorneys, investigators and support staff
 - 280-330 child clients per attorney
 - Best practice: 188 cases per attorney (with the assistance of a ½ time investigator)
- ▶ 24 delinquency courts
 - Youth represented by juvenile public defender or panel

Overview

Today we will be discussing:

- 1) Dually involved youth in general and why our advocacy is so critical
- 2) The need for focus and intensive case management for foster youth on probation
- 3) The CARE Unit.

Dual Status Youth

- ▶ Any youth who appears to come within the description of a probation youth and a foster youth.
- ▶ A youth receiving services from both child welfare and juvenile justice systems.
- ▶ Also called a Dually Involved or Crossover youth
- Each month, roughly 90-120 foster children in Los Angeles County have arrests and petitions filed, resulting in a dual status process. (recent numbers have dipped below 100)

Population Characteristics

- ▶ Frequent AWOLs
- ▶ Substance abuse history
 - usually co-occurring
- ▶ Mental health and/or developmental issues often present
- ▶ Educational deficits
- ▶ Disproportionally African American clients
- ▶ All have Abuse/neglect background (Trauma)
- ▶ Low self –esteem
- ▶ Distrustful of authority or “ The System”
- ▶ Multiple placements, congregate care

Crossover youth Statistics

- Child abuse and neglect increases the risk of arrest as a juvenile by 55%. (*Bilchik, 2007*)
- An Arizona study found that 73% of active dependents between the ages of 14 – 17 had been referred to delinquency court at least once in the past. (*Halemba, Siegel, Lord & Zawacki, 2004*)
- In Massachusetts, over 50% of juvenile offenders served by the Department of Youth Services had previously been under the care of the Department of Social Services. (*Wiig & Tuell, 2008*)

Statistical Outcomes for Crossover Youth

- When youth in foster care are arrested, they are more likely than other children with similar charges to be sent to juvenile detention facilities to await trial. (*Conger & Ross, 2001*)
- Crossover youth receive harsher processing outcomes compared to delinquent youth who have no connection to the dependency system. (*Hertz, Ryan & Bilchik, 2010*).
- Youth with histories of dependency court involvement are *twice* as likely to recidivate than juveniles with no dependency court involvement. (*Halemba, et. al., 2004*)

Los Angeles Study on Outcomes

Outcomes for youth aging out of system care:

- ☐ Child Welfare
- ☐ Probation
- ☐ Dual Status

Dual status youth had the worst outcomes

- Despite both agencies involvement
- Despite assessments
- Despite services/treatments (assuming they get linked)
- Despite Court involvement by dependency & delinquency

Why?

1. No one individual or agency responsible for coordination of services
2. Gaps in services between agencies
 - Funding restrictions
 - Lack of appropriate placements
 - Finger pointing
3. High Risk Youth
 - No families/group home placement AND multiple placements
 - Substance abuse/mental health issues
 - Educational challenges

What is missing?

Intensive case management to:

- Ensuring linkage to services and treatment
- On going evaluation of needs – lots of changes in teen years
- Parenting/support/encouragement/reminders
- Single point of contact

CARE

Crossover Advocacy and Resource Effort

Goals:

- To reduce the occurrence of violations and new offenses committed by dually involved youth
- To assist youth to successfully navigate and complete their term of probation
- To provide better advocacy in both Dependency and Delinquency courts for dually involved youth
- Reduce burden on case carrying CLC attorneys

The Los Angeles CARE Pilot

- ❑ Started 2012
- ❑ Staffed part-time by one dependency attorney supervisor and an MSW investigator supervisor
- ❑ MSW Interns from School of Social Work Graduate programs
 - Interns work 16-20 hour per week for 9 months
 - Possible 2 year commitment
- ❑ Field instructor acts as liaison between CLC and Graduate school

MSW Grad Student Interns

- Each assigned 5-7 youth to case manage
 - **Allows for frequent face to face contact (weekly)**
 - **Frequent phone, text or email contact with youth**
 - **Intern establishes rapport and collaborative relationship with the caregiver/staff, service providers, CSW and SPO**
 - **Intern maintains on going contact with youth for support, to ensure service linkage and to address changing needs or issues (therapy, placement, school, etc).**
 - **Attends PDM, TDM, court hearings – consistent, accurate and updated information**

Merging SW Values with Juvenile Justice

- ✓ **Holistic Perspective**
- ✓ **Bringing in Psychotherapeutic Skills**
- ✓ **Trauma-Informed Focus**
- ✓ **Recognizing Resilience**
- ✓ **Always Strength-Based**
- ✓ **Shift the Delinquent Youth Paradigm**
- ✓ **Professional Development for Those Working with At-Risk Youth**

Goal: To reduce the occurrence of violations and new offenses committed by youth on dual supervision

Providing information and support to youth and youth's caregiver to ensure they are aware of and abiding by conditions of probation.

- Going over conditions with youth slowly, comfortable setting, explaining each condition.
- Helping youth set up a plan.
- Provide support and encouragement to youth
- Engaging with caregiver or staff to help youth with conditions (ex. Transportation)

Goal: To Assist Youth to Successfully Navigate and Complete their Term of Probation

Ensure the CSW and supervising probation officer (SPO) have provided the youth with appropriate tools necessary to comply with their terms of probation (service linkage)

1) Contact SPO

- Obtain details of court ordered probation plan
- Establish rapport to facilitate on going communication and collaboration
- LA County Juvenile Probation – trouble shoot issues

2) Contact CSW

- Ensure services in place, trouble shoot issues
- Establish rapport to facilitate on going communication and collaboration

GOAL: Help Youth succeed on Probation

Objective: Ensure linkage...

- 3) Contact Defense Attorney
 - Open communication and collaboration: same page
- 4) Contact existing/new service providers
 - Verify engagement in services
 - Obtain progress report
 - Examples:
 - School
 - Counseling/substance abuse treatment
 - Mental health needs
 - Extracurricular/after school activities
 - Community service providers

Collaboration Between Probation and CLCLA – A unique partnership

- ▶ Supervising probation officers/CLC Cross trainings
 - Support from leadership/management
- ▶ CARE interns and SPO's on going communication
 - providing updated information – both directions
 - Strategizing on problem issues
 - Working together for a common goal
 - Early “heads up” – preventing violations with proactive case management.
 - Court appearances – a united front (or not)

Collaboration between CLC CARE & Probation

Hi Barbara,

Thank you for your extremely kind words. But, all I do is my job. And, no CSW is going to sit across from me and tell me a minor is in violation when she (the youth) is doing incredibly well. Also, your CARE program continues to do amazing work and I am motivated by your workers energy.

Dual Supervision Deputy Probation
Officer

GOAL: To Provide Better Advocacy in both Dependency and Delinquency Court for Dually Involved Youth

- 1) Provide updated information to Dependency Attorney
 - Recommend changes/additions/case strategies at least two days prior to court hearings (or as needed)
- 2) Attend Dependency Court Hearings
 - Review CSW reports to ensure accuracy and updated information included
- 3) Provide updated information to Defense Attorney
 - Prior to delinquency court date
- 4) Attend Delinquency Hearings
 - Review probation report to ensure consistency/accuracy with CSW reports and to ensure updated information included.

CARE Impact On Our Youth

Quote from Lisa:

“They were there to talk when I needed it. I looked forward to seeing them. It felt like getting away from it all when I saw them. I could let out my feelings. They were like counselors. They helped me learn to express myself better. When I was feeling down I learned to take deep breaths and let it out.

Another CARE Success

- ▶ “CARE has literally been a life saver in regards to giving me pointers about school, education, and decisions I’ve made that could affect the rest of my life. She (CARE intern) has been relentless with making sure all of my concerns did not stay unheard...I feel like this relationship between CLC and myself has definitely made a positive impact in my life. Because of the work CARE and (CLC Dependency attorney) did to work out resources that could benefit me, I felt cared for, which frequently encouraged me to care for myself”.

Measuring Outcomes

Working with Cal State LA – Professor Denise Herz and MSW grad student Kristine Chan to create a data tracking system to measure outcomes:

- Number of new violations and new offenses
- Number of youth who successfully complete probation
- Documentation of interventions and support by interns
- ❖ Alternative measures of success

The Children's Law Center of California



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